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MAYBLOOM AND MYRTLE

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MAYBLOOM AND MYRTLE

By

Samuel Minturn Peck

Author of

"The Grapevine Swing," "The Knot of Blue," etc., etc.

Boston

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TO

THE MEMORY OF

My Sister

MARY LEE PECK LEACH

I have been Maying,
Sighing while straying —
Sighing that all that is lovely is fleet;
What I bring hither,
Take ere it wither;
Maybloom and Myrtle I lay at your feet.

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Light Verse

Maybloom and Myrtle

THE TIME TO WOO

A LITTLE white rose in the garden blew,
When the dew in the dawn lay bright;
And over the grass came her lovers to woo,
And faithful troth to plight.
But the rose bade the wind go sigh, go sigh;
She flouted the vows of the butterfly;
And the cricket — he skipped without saying
good-bye
To the little white rose in the garden.

But alack! the wee rose — as the gloaming grew,
She quaked in the twilight gray,
When a moth flew out of a lime to sue
And won her without delay.
That bold night-moth that flew from the lime,
He won the wee rose without reason or rhyme,
Because — sly fellow! — he knew just the time
To woo a white rose in the garden.

PEGGY AT THE BROOK

A MOMENT on the bank to view
The tide with timid air,
And in she tript with kirtle blue
Above her white feet bare.
So fair a sight it never knew,
That shy and lilied nook;
Nor I amid
The willows hid,
When Peggy crossed the brook.

The glistening water loath to go,
Encircled rock and fern;
It eddied in its silver flow
With many a twist and turn.
The old mill waited far below —
The stream the call forsook;
And hushed its trill,
And tarried till
Sweet Peggy crossed the brook.

The sun slipt through the willow leaves.
And fell upon her hair;

'Mid locks the hue of autumn sheaves
It wove a witching snare.
Too late my beating heart perceives
The peril of a look:
The spell was wrought,
My heart was caught
As Peggy crossed the brook.

The mowers sang a merry lay,
Haymaking on the hill;
But down beside the brook that day
The air was soft and still.
I wished the scene might live for aye,
Like pictures in a book;
But fairest things
Have fleetest wings —
And Peggy crossed the brook.

HIS CONFIDANTE

POOR little Fan! You're left like this —
While she goes off to dance?
Alas, — I know, — 'tis hard to miss
That dimpled, roguish glance.
My sympathy! I grieve to see
You shut up, and half-hid —
I do, although you laughed at me,
Yes, saucy Fan, you did.

But I forgive. A lover seems
So queer — that's why you laughed.
Ah, if I told you all my dreams,
Perhaps you'd deem me daft.
I fancy you a butterfly;
I fancy her, a rose —
Strange fancies to a fan to sigh!
'Twere better to propose.

Sh! — she comes, my Rose of Light!
The Nymph I love — and fear.
Dear Fan, as you go home to-night,
Pray whisper in her ear:

Though many a vow she heard above
The murmur of the ball,
The man who dared not tell his love —
He loves her best of all.

THE QUAKER MAID

SHE was a little Quaker maid,
Her gown was quaint, her mien was staid.
Forsooth, no wild-flower by a brook
Was ever shyer in its look.
So sweet her eyes whene'er by chance,
'Neath drooping lids peeped forth her glance,
The while her cheeks the lashes kissed
One thought of stars behind a mist;
And as the Summer roses shed
A scent that lingers when they've fled,
So did the lustre of her eyes
In absence to my memory rise
To heighten joy, to banish pain.
And as we strolled a-down the lane,
Beside the gate her face grew sad;
And tremblingly to me,
" 'Tis late," she said, " yet I'd be glad
If thee would bide a wee."

She was a little Quaker maid,
And when she'd spoken, seemed afraid.
Had she propriety o'erstepped?
Oh, most appalling thought! She wept,

And quivering stood bedewed with tears,
Unconscious that, to soothe her fears,
The apple-blossoms drifted down
And gave her maidenhood a crown
Most fair and meet. I gazed a-thrill.
Had I the power — I had the will —
To win a love so lily-white
It shamed in spotlessness the light?
I dared. I spoke — the words were few,
And what they were, I never knew.
But this I know; no longer sad
Her face smiled up to me,
"Think thee 'tis late? I am so glad —
Come in and bide a wee!"

ANNE ELIZA GREEN

'TWAS at the singing school I met
That fair and most enchanting maid.
Her eyes were blue; her locks were jet,
With ribbons winsomely arrayed.
In one soft cheek a dimple hid
And only when she smiled was seen —
But, oh, the havoc that it did
For Anne Eliza Green!

Her red, red lips — 'twas kind o' queer,
But when she oped her mouth to sing
It seemed to me that I could hear
A rustle as of Cupid's wing.
Whene'er she laughed, as white as snow
Her small teeth flashed her lips between —
And oh, how sweet the laughter low
Of Anne Eliza Green!

And when the singing school was done,
And all stood 'neath the starry dome,
Each fellow strove to be the one
To see the peerless maiden home;

And when amid the adoring train
She chose an arm on which to lean,
She cast a smile on every swain,
Did Anne Eliza Green.

'Tis more than thirty years ago.
Alas, how fast old Time hath raced!
Perhaps her locks are flaked with snow,
More ample now her lissome waist;
Perhaps the crow hath paced those eyes
Whose glances now have grown serene —
Perhaps she'd fill me with surprise,
Sweet Anne Eliza Green.

We both have wed. I love my wife;
And doubtless she her husband too.
We both have reached the eve of life,
Our peaceful hearts have naught to rue.
Yet hearts are not controlled by will,
And each man's breast is like a screen —
So in the dusk I'm dreaming still
Of Anne Eliza Green.

MY OLD CLAY PIPE

I WOULD the skies were ever blue,
And life from sorrow free;
Or else that friends were always true,
But that can never be.
The hand of fate across the loom
Oft weaves a dusky stripe,
And then I seek amid the gloom
My old clay pipe.

'Tis wise to laugh one's ills away,
And hum a merry song,
But where's the heart that's always gay
When everything goes wrong!
So if a sulky pout I see
On dear lips red and ripe,
I find the friend still true to me,
My old clay pipe.

I used to think that I could make
Of life an endless smile,
And dreamed of one who, for my sake,
Were loving all the while;

But now I check the useless tear
I'd be too proud to wipe,
And bless the friend that's ever near,
My old clay pipe.

SYLVIA'S DIMPLE

SYLVIA'S gown was bewitching,
And fashioned of ribbon and lace,
A marvel of puffing and stitching,
Of criss-cross and curly-cue grace.
So perfectly planned was this toilette,
She rivalled a sylph in her shape;
And yet, I had power to foil it —
'Twas her dimple I could not escape.

Sylvia's tresses were tinted
With amber in shine and in shade;
The sunlight — how tenderly glinted
Its rays on the locks of the maid!
Sooth, it was rapture to eye them
Imprisoned in ringlet or twist;
Yet, truly, I might have passed by them —
'Twas her dimple I could not resist.

Her cheeks had the color of peaches
That lightly the Summer hath kissed,
Or the hue of the rose that beseeches
The moon, half-hid by a mist.

'Twas peerless — the line of their curving
By sun-heated breezes untanned;
I might have beheld them, unswerving —
'Twas her dimple I could not withstand.

Ah, what shall I sing of her lashes,
The shy, haunting lustre beneath,
As bright as the wild spray that dashes —
As soft as the dew on a wreath!
Her delightfully perilous glances
Extorted my rapturous sigh;
To flee them, perhaps there were chances —
But her dimple, ah, who could defy!

Her beauty was ever before me,
Like an innocent star in the night;
Her dimple 'twere well to deplore me,
Like a sharp-shooter hidden from sight.
All armor were useless, but elfin,
For none can be fashioned by art;
And lacking the sort to put self in,
A flash! — I was shot through the heart.

THE OLD CLOCK

LONG since run down,
It ticks no more,
Though the dusty town
May toil and roar.
To Time farewell
It said, you see,
With its silver bell
At half past three.

Half past three —
'Tis the best of hours
In Winter's glee,
Mid the Summer flowers.
If I might choose
'Twould always be
With me, dear Muse,
Just half past three.

See the roses drowse
On yonder wall,
While amid the boughs
The birds low call.

Sweet hour when Care
  Ne'er claims his fee —
How could he dare
    At half past three!

Mid-afternoon!
  No heart aches blight;
'Tis yet too soon
  To dread the night.
Day's loveliness
  From sorrow free
Each soul must bless
    At half past three.

Ah, dear old Clock,
  How wise you were!
Though Time may knock,
  You will not stir.
Pray teach me how —
  Yes, whisper me
Your spell just now,
    At half past three!

A TWILIGHT PICTURE

AT the hour of twilight stilly,
In a cozy window nook,
Softly bending like a lily
Breathless o'er a story-book,
Sitteth Edith;
As she readeth,
Pity shines in every look.

Few the cares that ever find her,
Summer's with her all the year;
Jack will tease, or Gyp won't mind her —
Such the woes she hath to fear.
She must borrow
All her sorrow, —
On her book hath dropped a tear!

I, alas, am eight and twenty,
Edith's only eight and three;
I have daily cares in plenty,
Sorrows, too, that never flee;
Would that Edith
As she readeth
Might let fall a tear for me.

INGLE FANCIES

A SONG for the fire on the hearthstone a-glow
When Summer hath fled with her fragrance and blow;
Though bleak be the hillside, new pleasures we know,
Nor storm-cloud nor tempest can harm us.
'Neath the lamp's golden lustre with picture and book,
Companioned by poets and sages we look
Down vistas of fancy, secure in our nook,
And a thousand sweet dreams come to charm us.

The flail of the sleet and the howl of the blast
But blend with the tales that we read, till at last
The white plume of Bayard gleams out from the past
Round castles beleaguered, and cities;
Or, the storm waxing fainter, fresh visions delight —
Love hastens with Fancy to rapture the sight,

And we wend through a wood with some amorous
knight,
And list to his love-laden ditties.

The flames leaping higher, we turn with a smile
To the knight of the sorrowful figure a while,
And Sancho a-daft for the long-promised isle
That fate is so tardy to dish up;
Or we hark to the Dromios' humorous clack,
Or the valorous Falstaff in praise of sweet sack;
Or else — for of fun there is never a lack —
We list to Gil Blas and the Bishop.

In cushionful ease 'neath the light of the lamp
We wander at will through the court and the
camp;
No terror can fray us, no hardship can damp
The joy that springs up from the ingle.
We dream and we dream until nothing seems true
Save that which is pleasant. Our youth we
renew
In olden romances, and we are knights, too,
With helmets and spurs all a-jingle.

A song for the hearthstone, a lyric of mirth,
For pleasures untold in its glamour have birth,
Which hearts never know that love only the earth
When mated with sunshine and flowers.

So heap on the logs. With picture and book,
Companioned by poets and sages, we look
Down vistas of fancy, secure in our nook,
And a thousand rare visions are ours.

PRISCILLA

PRISCILLA hath come back to town
A little bandit queen,
Her cheek hath robbed the berry's brown,
Her eye the dewdrop's sheen.
Upon her lips there brightly glows
The poppy's crimson hue,
With Autumn music in her toes
She charms the avenue.

Alas! how wildly hearts will beat
That late kept slowest time;
Alas! how many a snowy sheet
Will meet its fate in rhyme!
Laugh, Cupid, laugh, with saucy glee
At all the pangs in store,
But never point thy dart at me —
My heart was hers before.

THE MAID OF JAPAN

I KNOW a little maid,
May her beauty never fade! —
And her fan,
May its flutter never cease;
Though it robbed my heart of peace,
In Japan.

Where the cherry blossoms blow,
Blossom-like, she walked below,
Yo-ki-san!
Needless Cupid's bow and darts
To that little Queen of Hearts,
In Japan.

Why, 'twould give your heart a twist
Just her merry laugh to list;
And a span
Were the length you'd like your ear,
Should you catch it tinkling clear,
In Japan.

O, her cunning little song!
It is funny. Was it wrong?
Will it scan?

When I spied her dimpled chin,
It was fascinating din,
In Japan.

Then she brewed a cup of tea,
And she slyly winked at me,
O'er her fan, —
Enough! No poet's ink
Could describe that witching wink
In Japan.

That for Gibson girls! Instead,
I am going back to wed
Yo-ki-san;
And live a life of mirth
Till I vanish from the earth
In Japan.

TO MABEL WHO WISHED TO BE A SHEPHERDESS

YOU'D like to be a shepherdess
Beside a summer brook?
The sweetest rhyme could ne'er express
How charming you would look.
In kirtle blue and ribbons fair,
'Mid your devoted sheep,
I'm sure that you would never share
The fate of poor Bo-peep.

Ah, if you were a shepherdess
We'd meet at dawn of day!
The blissful thought, I must confess,
Quite takes my breath away.
We'd gaily trip across the grass,
Unmindful of the dew;
In faithful love I'd far surpass
The lamb that Mary knew.

Were you a little shepherdess,
We'd skip and tra-la-la
Until, for very joyousness
The woolies echoed " Ba-a! "

And then some sweet, secluded spot
We'd seek in merry mood,
And, by the selfish world forgot,
We'd feast on berry food.

Were you a little shepherdess —
What happy fancies teem!
With difficulty I repress
My rapture at the dream.
With Mrs. Grundy out of sight,
And nature all in tune,
We'd fold our lambkins up at night
And woo beneath the moon.

Oh, if you were a shepherdess —
But have you weighed the price?
I shudder at your wild distress,
Deprived of chocolate ice.
And how you'd miss your curling tongs!
Without a looking-glass,
In spite of all my pretty songs
You'd be a wretched lass.

Ah, if you were a shepherdess —
Imagination climbs!
On such a theme I might digress
And weave a thousand rhymes.

But you will never sport a crook
To witch my raptured sight —
Here comes your aunt with savage look —
The ball is done — good night!

LITTLE WHITE SHOON

LITTLE WHITE SHOON, you are dainty and slim
As you flit o'er the ballroom floor;
Worthy are you for an artist to limn,
A poet to hymn — and adore.
I gaze in amaze at your frolicsome flight,
As a wight by enchantment bewitched —
But what do you care as you trip it to-night?
You snare that the Pixies have stitched!

Little White Shoon, like twin butterflies
That circle a garden a-blow,
With rapturous sighs and love-laden eyes
I follow wherever you go.
'Neath satin a-shimmer you glimmer as gay
As lily buds wet with the dew —
If I mix up my similes, pardon me, pray,
Each moment I'm wildered anew.

Little White Shoon, you have gallants, a score,
Around you they sigh and aspire,
And into your ear vapid compliments pour
Unmeet for the grace they admire;

But melody springs from my lyre, for its strings
  Are a-quiver because you are near,
And when you have vanished, like all lovely
    things,
  The world of your beauty shall hear.

Little White Shoon — afar from the rout,
  What fancies are blent with my dreams!
As you pit-a-pat, pit-a-pat gleaming about,
  I catch the sweet ripple of streams;
The scent of the wild rose a-sway in the wind,
  The song of the shy forest bird,
The glamour of moonlight with shadows en-
    twined,
  In my dreaming are felt and are heard.

Little White Shoon, the night's ebbing fast,
  The East's growing pink with the morn;
The fairer the vision the quicker 'tis past —
  Alas, must you leave me forlorn!
The cellos are breathing a final refrain:
  May your beauty ne'er wither or blight,
And soft be the touches of sorrow and pain;
  Little White Shoon, good night!

PEGGY

O PEGGY, dear Peggy, so lovely you are,
I'm dazzled anear you and haunted afar;
Each moment I find in your flowerlike face
Some shy hidden charm it is rapture to trace.
In the depths of your eyes shadowed violets nest,
That come in the night-time and rob me of rest;
And when hies the morning no comfort I win,
As I dream of the dimple that peeps from your chin.

Ah, Peggy, dear Peggy, the lasses all frown
As you trip through the street in your pretty blue gown;
They scoff and they murmur; there's sorrow to pay —
The hearts of the laddies you've taken away.
The eyes of the swains ever follow your feet,
Bewitched by a music no rhyme can repeat;
For the fairies attend you wherever you go,
And dance to the pat of your gay little toe.

Yet, Peggy, dear Peggy, with lovers a score,
Some day you must choose from the hearts that adore;

There's a time to coquet and a time to have done.
You've smiled upon twenty, now love only one.
'Tis folly to falter. Why tarry to mate?
A word in your ear as you tremble and wait.
True counsel I offer, as honest as free,
Just take my advice, Peggy — Peggy, take me.

LONG AGO

I WATCHED her sew, a witching sight,
Her dimpled cheeks with youth a-blow
Beneath the lamp's rose-shaded light.
It should have shamed me well, I know —
Her gleaming needle nimbly bright.
'Twas she that toiled. Her idle beau,
I watched her sew,
Long ago.

I watched her sew, I, happy wight.
When was it? Ah, 'twas long ago.
Yet Memory's graces never blight,
Sweet beacons baffling Time, the foe;
And 'twas her wedding gown that night —
My bride to be — with eyes a-glow,
I watched her sew,
Long ago.

MY LITTLE PICTURE TREE

UPON me, from my study wall,
A little picture looks,
And bird-like e'er its glances fall
From out a nest of books.
And when I lift my weary eyes,
It seems to smile at me,
As if it wished to chase my sighs —
That little picture tree!

Of course there's something else beside
The tree to give me joy:
A brook, some sheep; and happy-eyed,
A little shepherd boy.
Who sits and sings the whole day long,
The while, with kindred glee,
A merry bird gives song for song
Upon my picture tree.

'Tis pleasant to have something nigh,
Where life is only play —
When everything has gone awry,
To look at something gay;

To know, when all the sunshine's gone
And only clouds I see,
That still the sun is shining on
My little picture tree.

When disappointment plants a sting,
When editors refuse,
When long-expected letters bring
The very worst of news;
Whene'er my faithful wife is cross,
Or children won't agree,
There still is balm for all my loss
Beneath my picture tree.

Upon the brook the lilies gleam
In soothing grace arrayed,
Their vision sets my soul a-dream,
And all my sorrows fade;
The little woolies seem to say:
"Why don't you do as we?
There's nothing drives our joy away
Beneath the picture tree."

And then I emulate the sheep,
Who wiser are than I;
I close my eyes and fall asleep,
And fancy by and by

That free from care and all annoy,
With every bliss in fee,
I am the little shepherd boy
Beneath my picture tree.

AN OLD MIRROR FROM TOURAINE

IT is a thing of beauty. See
The frame with lovely figures garnished;
Here Pan pursues lithe Nymphs that flee —
What grace survives by Time untarnished!
The rim, too, cirques a lake of light
Which keeps unflawed the olden splendor,
As pure as when at Beauty's rite
It smiled to greet forms fair and slender.

I trow before it many a snare
Was slyly laid by scheming Cupid,
Who joyed to find a witching lair
'Neath rippling locks, by ribbon loop hid.
Doubt not he forged his keenest dart
In laughing eye, or twinkling dimple,
And when he pierced a gallant heart
There was no healing herb or simple.

Perchance Diane de Poictiers
Before this mirror bound her tresses;
Or peerless Gabrielle d'Estrees,
Whose charms no artist's brush expresses;

Ay, Sorceresses by the score
  Arise, with claims to goodness fragile,
For when Romance hath oped her door,
  Imagination waxes agile.

In old Touraine what glamour lies!
  Our sterner rules in vain assert you;
More lenient grow our wistful eyes
  When steeper mounts the path to virtue.
The pretty moths! They singed their wings,
  And fluttered oft in clouds of scandal.
But think! It was enamored kings
  Who stooped to light the luring candle.

An epoch 'twas of love and crime,
  Of gleaming armor, plumes and lances,
Cowled Monks that pray, Trouveres that rhyme —
  Ah, how the picture still entrances!
All sinful deeds we should regret,
  And strive to chill the glow that fills us;
It was a fearful age, and yet —
  And yet a strange enchantment thrills us.

In modern ways we would delight,
  Would praise above the old, the new man,
And still the medieval knight
  We much prefer — he was so human.

A sinner oft, but ne'er a cad,
In morbid scenes he scorned to revel;
And by the glimmering light he had
He sought the truth, and fought the Devil.

The women, too, of elder days,
Let legend still their crowns bequeath them,
The while we listen to the lays
With which their faithful minstrels wreathe them!
And though we deem them weakly willed,
Why should we scoff, with wisdom riper?
Like shattered roses they are still,
And if they danced — they paid the piper.

BY THE HEARTH AT HALLOWEEN

THE wonder hours are with us; upon the hearth to-night
Around the heaped-up logs the flames twine up in weird delight.
They set the shadows dancing o'er the rafters and the wall
Till it seems the gnomes of Elfland have burst their mountain thrall.
To the crackle of the blazing wood within the chimney place,
How the shadow ballet bows and sways with tiptoe, pixy grace!
And sooth, should not a touch of fairy pageantry be seen?
It is the spot for glamoury — the hearth at Halloween.

Yea, 'tis the hour for glamoury. Let Fancy have her way.
To-night the powers unknown to us may change our lives for aye —
May weave our lots like tiny threads, and dye them dark or fair —

May give us garments for our souls we may not
choose but wear —
May plan our paths, and who shall meet on
ocean, land or lake;
What breasts shall swell with happiness, what
hearts shall ache and break.
If ever spells are worked at all this is the time,
I ween,
And this the wonder haunted spot — the hearth
at Halloween.

Can't you catch an eerie answer in the echo when
we laugh?
Can't you see an eerie winking in the bubbles
as we quaff?
And dared you glance behind you as you came
a-down the stair —
Didn't you feel as if a face unseen had breathed
upon your hair!
I know not how it is with you — it filled me with
affright
When I passed the long, white mirror ghastly
gleaming in the night.
Ah, cast another log on, yes, a dry log, not a
green.
And draw a little closer 'round the hearth at
Halloween.

'Tis gliding on to midnight. See the embers
growing gray.
The Cricket stops his shrilling and in silence
steals away.
What is it makes us whisper? Is it aught we
can divine?
It seems to me 'twere meet to sing the song of
"Auld Lang Syne."
And as we sing we'll think of them — the faces
of the dead;
And when at last the dear old words all fra-
grantly have sped,
Hand clasping hand we'll breathe a prayer, and
then with hearts serene
We will wend to peaceful dreaming from the
hearth at Halloween.

Lyrics of Love

AN OLDEN DREAM

DO you recall the roses white
That blossomed in the long ago?
I still can see the petals light
That fell and flaked your locks below.
Beneath the swaying vine that night
You heard my passion, half afraid;
No blossoms now are e'er so bright,
For memory's roses never fade.

Oh, say, do you recall the song
You sang beneath the summer moon?
The lay was neither loud nor long;
'Twas even then an old, old tune;
Yet often mid the careless throng
Within my heart its echo sighs,
And sings and sings when life goes wrong —
For memory's music never dies.

Long years have passed. Again with you
I linger in the stilly night;
Above the darkness and the dew
The faithful stars are shining bright.

The tears that fill your eyes of blue
Proclaim you too have known regret;
Sweetheart, let's make the old dream true —
Though late, we may be happy yet!

THE FAIRY FLOWER

I SAW a fairy flower a-blow,
It gladdened all the day;
With wistful eyes I watched it glow,
And then I turned away
With thought to come again ere night;
At twilight-tide 'twere best
To cull that little blossom bright,
And wear it on my breast:
And so,
My footsteps I hurried,
Alackaday!
I toiled the long hours in glee,
With dreams of the grace of that way-side place,
And the blossom that blew for me.

With toil o'erspent I came at last.
'Twas dewy even-tide,
And down the morning way I passed
With Memory for my guide,
And where the light was wan and thin
I dashed the boughs apart;
So eagerly I sought to win
The blossom of my heart:

But oh,
Love was the flower,
Alackaday!
In a woman's face it shone,
And a wiser than I had passed thereby,
And the bloom of my life had flown.

WHEN KATY TUNED THE OLD GUITAR

THE sweetest strain that ever
My raptured ears have heard —
I know that memory never
Can lose a single word —
Was on a balmy evening,
That crowned a summer day,
When Katy tuned the old guitar
And sang my heart away.

The happy starlight beaming
Upon her lily throat
Set wistful fancy dreaming
With every haunting note.
It was no idle ballad,
No senseless modern lay;
With " Bonny Annie Laurie " lo,
She sang my heart away.

And when the song was over
And Katy breathed a sigh,
She, too, could boast a lover
Would lay him down and die.

'Twas then I told my secret,
And still I bless the day
When Katy tuned the old guitar
And sang my heart away.

A MESSAGE BY NIGHT

I THINK of you. I wonder
How went with you the day;
If you are dull, or sorry;
If you are glad and gay;
How bend the skies above you,
If they are soft and blue;
Like birds they come,
When words are dumb —
The thoughts I think of you.

I think of you. I wonder
What faces do you meet;
And if their glances charm you,
And if their smiles are sweet;
If you forget the absent —
They say that most men do! —
But you? — Oh, no!
It can't be so;
I won't think that of you.

I think of you. Perhaps you
Are dancing at a ball.

Your partner next — I wonder
If she is short, or tall.
I almost heard the music —
Just now the night wind blew —
It could not be,
I know; but see
How much I think of you.

I think of you. Soon morning
Will blossom o'er the sea;
To me — all night so wakeful —
'Twill bring no joy to me.
The weary, weary hours!
Alas, my joys are few;
And all day long,
Till evensong,
I'll only think of you.

I wonder, yes, I wonder,
Why Fancy flies so fast;
Why Memory paints so brightly
The pleasures that are past!
'Tis sad to sit and marvel
At Time's and Fate's decree:
I think of you —
If I but knew
You only thought of me!

A TWILIGHT SONG

THE day is waning in the west,
As fades the summer rose;
And softly, with a song of rest,
The evening zephyr goes
To wake, like little sparks of light,
The tiny drops of dew,
The fairy lanterns of the night
That lead to dreams of you, Sweetheart —
That lead to dreams of you!

Avaunt the bramble cares that lie
Along the path of toil!
Calm twilight soothes my anxious sigh,
And stills the fraying moil;
And faring homeward through the dusk
Life blooms with hope anew.
With thoughts out-sweeting thyme or musk
I go to dream of you, Sweetheart —
I go to dream of you!

Asleep, and fended from my grief,
Too fleetly hies the day;

The happy night is all too brief,
  Would it might last for aye,
Or else that I might never wake
  To find my dream untrue!
Some time my hapless heart will break
  Because I dream of you, Sweetheart —
    Because I dream of you!

THE GARDEN OF MY HEART

THERE is a garden in my heart
  By memory's fingers planted;
No frost can make its bloom depart,
  Or break the spell enchanted.
From year to year
It grows more dear,
  'Neath skies of cloudless hue,
Where love abides without a fear,
  And dreams, Sweetheart, of you.

There is a garden in my heart
  That ne'er a storm hath blighted,
Where, mid the flowers, untouched by art,
  Sweet Fancy strays, delighted;
Where care, nor grief,
Nor Time, the thief,
  Can ever work me rue;
And every little, laughing leaf,
  In whispers, talks of you.

There is a garden in my heart,
  So fair that in the gloaming

The happy teardrops swell and start
  Where'er my feet are roaming.
So blessed am I
I cannot sigh
  For bliss beyond the blue;
For who could long for joy on high,
  Beloved on earth by you?

SONG

I LOVE thee as the wind of night
Adores the summer rose,
And ever in the silver light
His homage soft bestows;
With joy, because her lovely face
Hath bound him with a spell;
In woe, because her matchless grace
His song can never tell.

I love thee as the forest brook
The fragile woodland fern,
Love murmuring through the shadowed nook
At every pebbled turn;
With rapture, that she bends so near,
The shy and trembling leaf!
In pain, he cannot stay to hear
Sweet answer to his grief.

THE BLOSSOM FROM LILLIAN'S HAIR

THE morning hath silvered the sea,
In the east is a glimmering light,
The world is awaking in glee,
But my memory reverts to the night.
I dream of a fair woman's face
As she bade me good night on the stair,
And I tenderly place
In a little brown vase
The blossom from Lillian's hair.

With long silken lashes a-sweep
O'er her cheek that is dimpled below,
I picture her softly asleep,
Like a lily half hid in the snow,
While I in my loneliness kiss
The prize that I won with a prayer;
Of a moment of bliss
All is vanished but this —
A blossom from Lillian's hair.

At noon when her eyelids unclose,
And the fairies of Drowsyland flee

That guarded her balmy repose
Will she give a small fancy to me?
No matter! this dear little bloom,
Though faded, I'll treasure with care;
'Twill lighten the gloom
Of my desolate room,
The blossom from Lillian's hair.

SONG AT TWILIGHT

SITTING in the twilight, with remembered Junes,
I dream of her I used to love, and hum the old love tunes;
And wonder if the maidens
I meet are now as fair,
Or Summer's blossoms half as sweet
As those she used to wear.

Sitting in the twilight, stars peep amid the gloom:
There's fragrance on the eventide, for Memory's roses bloom.
And in the wind's low whisper
I seem to list once more
The loving words she used to say,
The Love I loved of yore.

SONG

I WANDERED through the wildwood,
The way was dank and cool,
With here and there a slanting ray
A-glimmer on a pool.
I seemed to feel a prescience
Ineffable and rare;
And though that day,
Far leagues away,
I knew my love was there.

I turned me to a field-path
Beneath the sun a-glow;
Amid the grasses at my feet
Bright blossoms were a-blow;
They seemed alive with joyous grace,
So blithe they were, and fair.
But sweeter still,
There came a thrill —
I knew my love was there.

When happy hearts are loyal,
No distance can divide;

Or far or near, an effluence
O'erspans both hill and tide.
Some subtle power e'er through it steals
And robs the soul of care.
What's fleeting breath,
Yea, even death,
When love is everywhere?

ROSE SONG

THE roses come with every Spring
To blossom just as fair;
Beneath the flying swallow's wing
They sweet the sunny air.
Red, white, and gold, with grace untold,
They bud, they blow, they flee,
To come again just as of old
And thrill the wold with glee.

The happy flowers, I love them well.
I marvel not the wind,
Enchanted by their fairy spell,
Lags, loverlike, behind.
Yet all the while he sighs his woes
As if on bended knee,
I'm dreaming of a vanished rose
I nevermore shall see.

UNDER THE MOON

FLOWERS, and dew, and the moon shining down,
And you, little Love, in your filmy, white gown —
O Time — cruel Time — stay your flight!
Though flouted by Fortune, and scorned by Renown,
I'm happy, yes, happy tonight.

One hour I've drank of a rapture undoled;
Love hath answered to love as my passion I told —
I have culled the fair rose of delight.
Ah, little I care what the future may hold,
You are mine, you are mine, Love, tonight!

The beads on Life's rosary — many are dark,
And counted in sorrow. One pearl I can mark;
Its lustre, white, peerlessly white;
When all waxeth dim, I shall treasure its spark —
Ay, dead, I shall dream of tonight.

THE LOVER

THE lover — what should counsel him,
And mingle magic with his song?
The spirit of the twilight dim,
The soul of summers sweet and long;
The carols of the birds and bees,
Blent with the breath of moonlit flowers
Which garland Time the while he flies,
And add but swiftness to the hours.

The lover — ah, what shall I take
To symbolize his faithful soul?
The moon-chained tide with ceaseless flow,
The needle constant to the pole,
The echo of the distant hills,
That sweetens discord as it flies,
The fragrant herb that, crushed, distils
A keener perfume ere it dies.

The lover — oh how blest is he,
E'en though his bliss no guerdon gains!
A boundless bliss he holds in fee
That crowns with rapture all his pains.

For 'tis not being loved that wreathes
The heart with joy's supernal glow;
No; it is loving that bequeathes
The purest pleasure life can know.

NUTTING SONG

THE day that we went nutting —
To memory how dear!
The music of the swaying boughs,
The west wind, crisp and clear,
Upon whose wings were wafted
The scent of spicy leaves,
Blent with a softer fragrance
Of wheat and barley sheaves.

The day that we went nutting
Blue skies o'er-arched the ways,
And vanished summer's beauty
Still hung, a haunting haze,
Too peaceful e'er to sadden,
Too lovely not to bless —
An aureole o'er the future
Of joy and tenderness.

The day that we went nutting
Amid the autumn woods
We shook the shining chestnuts
From out their prickly hoods,

And hickory nuts and hazel,
They gaily pattered down;
But not a one could match in hue
Your gleaming eyes of brown.

The day that we went nutting —
Rare, golden afternoon,
With thistle-down a-floating
Like flitting fairy shoon,
There was some spell around us
Unfathomed of the wise;
Its thrilling power I felt, although
It baffled ears and eyes.

The day that we went nutting
We thought alone we strayed;
But one with fern seed 'neath his foot
A tricksy visit paid:
Beside our well-filled basket
Young Cupid tripped in glee,
And as we bore our treasure home
He won your heart for me.

MY LOVE FOR THEE

THE love whose thoughts far swifter fly
Than sea birds through the spray;
The love that craves with stifled sigh
A dear voice far away;
Whose longing memories strive to trace
Each smile of vanished glee;
And soars sublime through time and space —
That is my love for thee.

The wistful love that clings and clings
Like some forsaken child;
The trustful love that sings and sings
With echoes weird and wild;
That whispers in the lonely night
Of what can never be,
From eyes a-gleam with tearful light —
That is my love for thee.

The love that hath no part of bliss
And only breathes in pain,
And yet whose pang I would not miss
For all the stars contain;

That broke my heart in days gone by,
And wrecked my life for me,
The hopeless love that ne'er can die —
That is my love for thee.

THE WAIF

WITH words as sweet as violets
I wove a dainty song for her;
My fingers stole across the frets,
And set the golden chords astir,
They quivered with a passion true
That told my heart was hers alone;
But, oh, her love was like the dew,
A-flash at morn, ere noonday flown!
Yet I will keep my lay,
And bide another day;
The bird that flies
To other skies
Returns to greet the May.

Mayhap some day her merry glance
Will fail to meet the light it throws;
Some day her happy heart perchance
May feel the thorn beneath the rose;
And if neglect should pain the breast
That nature only formed for glee,
With aching heart that longs for rest,
My little Love may fly to me.

Then I will rise and say:
Let naught my Sweet affray.
  Love's beacon burns,
  My bosom yearns;
The old love lives for aye.

SERENADE

THE moon is all silver, the heavens all blue,
Soft whispers the wind from the sea;
The white roses nodding and glistening with dew
Are wafting their fragrance to thee.
Lean out from thy window, lean forth with a smile
And pity thy lover below;
Let thy beauty shine out like a pearl from the isle
That only the sea fairies know;
For naught to compare is —
So sigh the wee fairies —
With thee in thy beauty a-blow.

The night bird is singing as if he were daft
A lay to his mate in the tree.
How far I'd surpass him had I but the craft!
Wild-sweet were my love song to thee.
So give me one glance of thy lily-like face
Ere the moon goeth down in the west;
Ay, add the last charm to an hour full of grace

And heaven and earth will be blest.
Let one look delight me,
One soft smile good night me,
Then sink like a dove in thy nest.

SONG IN ABSENCE

SWEETHEART, how fares the night,
While I am afar — and alone!
To viol and flute do you glide through the light
Like a Nymph from the wildwood blown?
Do the Gallants struggle as you trip by
To catch one glance from your laughing eye,
Bright as the dew when the Wind's asigh,
From skies of April blue?
Anear, or apart,
The round year through,
Flower-o'-my-heart,
I dream of you.

Sweetheart, the hours are long,
But nothing my faith can mar;
Not even Fancy can work you wrong —
God bless you wherever you are!
Pure as the bloom by the Springtide rill,
The trembling flower that knows no ill,
'Tis you I love — and have no will —
As the wave to the star, I'm true.

Anear, or apart,
'Neath Rose or Rue,
Flower-o'-my-heart,
I dream of you.

Lyrics of Nature

TWILIGHT

THE light is growing dimmer,
And the white musk roses glimmer
In the gray.
From every wayside thicket
With his tiny dirge a cricket
Mourns the day.

The shades are waxing thicker;
See the ghastly moth a-flicker —
What would he?
Like a greedy, ghoulish spectre,
He hies to glean the nectar
Of the bee.

Oh, the borderland of daytime,
'Tis the fickle fancy's maytime,
When the eye —
Ha! what was that a-quiver!
How the leaflet made me shiver,
Flitting by!

Eerie seems the fragrance
Of the flowers in its vagrance —
Who can tell!

Be there ghosts, as one supposes,
Then why not wraiths of roses
Just as well?

In the daylight are we deafer —
Heard you e'er from noontide zephyr
Such a tune?
But see! — the spell is over;
Above the hillside clover
Comes the moon.

WHERE THE ROSEMARY BLOWS BY THE SEA

THE Summer is passing. A prescient tint
Is blent with the blossoms that border the lane;
With sound, as with color, is wafted a hint
As I list to the cricket's reiterant strain.
The charms that are fleeting grow dear as they part,
The joy of the Spring dwells in beauty to be;
And the grace that is latest I clasp to my heart,
Where the Rosemary blows by the sea.

The songs of the birds in the Winter are still,
Their carols are borne to a sunnier shore;
But the lay of the billows no north wind can kill,
And louder 'twill ring when the Summer's no more.
The blast from the Norland may whiten the spray —
But what is the bloom of the ocean to me!
Far dearer's the beauty that nothing can stay,
Where the Rosemary blows by the sea.

The Summer is passing. Another will come
With birds, bees, and blossoms to breathe of their bliss;
But something I cherished will ever be dumb,
In the whispering breezes a grace I shall miss.
Sweet Summer, good-by! What the heart cannot bind
It loves with a fondness that never can flee —
And that is the message I've wandered to find,
Where the Rosemary blows by the sea.

THE OLD-TIME FLOWERS

THE old-time flowers! The flowers seem bold
That deck the lawns today;
Too confident their buds unfold,
They are too proudly gay;
Their hues are dazzling in the sun,
They flaunt before the eye.
It was not so my heart they won —
The flowers in days gone by.

The old-time flowers! How sweet they were
Upon the morning bough!
Each dawn I felt my wonder stir —
Are there such perfumes now?
It was not strange the dewdrops gleamed
More brightly on their sprays,
Or if by night the glad stars beamed
With softer, gentler rays.

The old-time flowers! I often long
To view their vanished grace!
A thousand lovely visions throng
As fancy turns to trace

Those fragile petals filmy fair,
  That wooed the golden light
In that old garden quaint and rare
  Whose love no time can blight.

The old-time flowers — the birds and bees
  That hummed those flowers among!
The spring now brings no melodies
  As sweet as those they sung;
And in the breeze that murmurs by
  There's something lacking too;
And when I lift my glance on high,
  The sky seems not so blue.

The old-time flowers, all flowers above,
  Their peerless day is o'er,
Yea, old-time flowers, like old-time love,
  They glad the world no more.
And yet what lovely visions throng
  As Fancy limns their grace,
Which echoes like a sweet, old song
  In Memory's twilight place.

WIND SONG

I LOVE the song of the wind in the grass
Where the gay-winged butterflies flutter and pass;
And the white-browed daisies bend and sway,
A-drowse in the balm of the summer day;
While all day long o'er the clovered lea,
From bloom to bloom flits the droning bee.
I feel a spell that is soft and mild,
And I sink to rest like a tired child;
I dream and dream, and the wrong comes right.
Would time stood still — but it won't, alas —
As I list to the song of the wind in the grass!

I love the song of the wind in the tree,
It lifts my soul with its carol free;
I view the boughs as they laugh and toss,
And dapple the light on the low, green moss.
I upward look, and I long to know
The wordless message that glads them so.
The young birds high in their swinging nest,
I envy the wings that they long to test.
They will leave, I know, when the summer is done,
And seek some blooming isle of the sun;

Yet I share a joy that is not for me,
As I list to the song of the wind in the tree.

I love the song of the wind o'er the wave,
For it seems to tell of the sailors brave;
And I fancy the music which rings o'er the foam
Is a message of love to the loved at home;
For love can span, if the love be true,
A thousand leagues on the ocean blue;
And across the waste that hath no track,
The thoughts that are fond come swiftly back;
As the sea-gull flies to his craggy nest
Flits the dreaming heart to the spot loved best.
So I lift for the sailor a sturdy stave
As I list to the song of the wind o'er the wave.

THE CRICKET ON THE HEARTH

I LOVE the merry warblers,
The lyrists of the Spring.
But when those bards in feathers
Have flown on fickle wing,
Out, from the frozen grasses,
There hies, without delay,
A singer small,
More blithe than all
The tuneful choir of May.

Without — the snow is drifting;
Within — the back-log's glow
Slow-waning, leaves in shadow
My faithful books a-row;
I catch the wind's wild moaning,
An yet — I am not sad:
Care frowns in vain —
I entertain
A Minstrel ever glad.

He pipes — I feel the sunshine,
I scent the Summer rose;

Maybloom and Myrtle

Anear my feet a brooklet
Is tinkling as it goes;
The yellow bees are humming
A drowsy, golden glee;
And all night long
I live in song
Through Summers yet to be.

A SUMMER MOOD

BY Fancy led my heart's away;
Such golden weather's made for play.
'Tis only dullards toil for aye,
And hoard up treasure
That graceless heirs may make them gay
In thankless pleasure.

Yes, let me lie beneath the trees
Mid clover rippled by the breeze,
And list with quite unenvying ease
My toiling neighbors,
The never-resting, moiling bees,
And scorn their labors.

Perhaps 'tis wrong, with careless eyes,
To cast my lot with butterflies,
Philosophers of azure skies
Who know no sorrow.
Yet if my life should lack in sighs,
There's grief to borrow.

No tangled creed my soul shall bind;
I'll frolic with the laughing wind,

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And leave my gnawing care behind,
  Or tread the worm on;
While in each fragrant flower I'll find
  A joyous sermon.

The woodland scents shall be my gain;
Their balmy breath shall wash my brain
Till, clean of every spiteful stain,
  I wax so moral.
On all my faults I frown disdain —
  And never quarrel.

WHAT THE WILD WINDS SAY

WOULD you know what the wild
winds say?
'Neath the sun and the rain
You must tune your brain
In the dim, new day;
From the world apart
You must list with your heart
To know what the wild winds say.

To learn what the wild winds tell,
You must leave your book
For the forest brook,
And the leafy dell;
You must seek to be wise
'Neath the open skies,
To learn what the wild winds tell.

For the lore of the winds is deep!
They have quaffed the dew,
And the mystic brew
Their lips still keep.

Where the night flower gleams,
They have fathomed her dreams —
Oh, the lore of the winds is deep!

When you know what the wild winds say,
Ah, cool in your breast
The song will rest
Like a charm for aye;
For the sweet message told,
Will never wax old, —
When you know what the wild winds say.

CRAPE MYRTLE

IN the land where I was born
Grows a flower that I love;
And to-day,
It is blowing in the morn,
With Southland skies above
Blue and gay.

In a Norland land afar
I am haunted by its spell,
Flower of love,
Like a fair and distant star,
Like the murmur of a shell,
Or a dove.

'Tis a garden quaint and old,
Where the rose and jasmine white
Interlace —
There its plumes of pink unfold,
And its sweetness charms the night,
Full of grace.

The Mock-bird builds his nest
In the fragrant gloom below,
'Neath its gleams;

And he sings his mate to rest —
I can hear the music flow
In my dreams.

O those myrtle boughs of pink
Swaying in the Southern calm!
Weary brains
Need of Lethe ne'er to drink,
For before their beauty's balm
Sorrow wanes.

THE SECRET OF THE WOOD

THE bards of old sang Arcady,
  Where nimble dryads tripped the glen;
Ah, would our hearts could wiser be,
  Yet keep the olden joy of men!
For me the woods still weave a spell
  Within their aisles of fragrant green,
And fancies come no doubt can quell,
  And whisper oft of forms unseen.

Or nymphs, or elves, not mine to name
  The beings strange I feel so near;
A quiver steals along my frame,
  An eerie thrill too faint for fear.
Ah, what was that? A leaflet? No!
  That glided through the dappled air,
I felt it come, I felt it go;
  It touched my cheek and stroked my hair.

'Tis fled; and now a murmur swells
  Companioned by a scent so sweet,
Of rites mysterious it tells,
  And viewless censers frail and fleet.

I strive to catch the whispered prayer
That floats along the forest nook
Before it fades in cadence rare
Blent with the tinkle of the brook.

Still deeper down the verdant way
A quaking leaf, not zephyr-fanned,
Lures on my feet; I must obey
The beckoning of an unseen hand.
Such slender film two worlds divides,
No longer far that finer air
Within whose depths a secret hides
Illimitably great and fair.

A secret 'tis to soothe and bless
The aching thirst of restless hearts
Who only feel life's bitterness,
Unanswered longings, poisoned smarts.
A secret 'tis no chemists fire,
No philosophic search can wrest;
'Twill only gladden his desire
Who kneels and lists at Nature's breast.

Though much be known, still more remains;
We cannot tell what yet may be.
We dull our sense with fruitless gains;
With clouded eyes how can we see?

The Heaven we deem so faint and far,
  Past planet mild, or Milky Way,
Who knows it lies in some fair star,
  And not around our path to-day?

Perhaps not in the sullied mart,
  Where priests of fraud and Mammon meet,
But in some purer place apart,
  Where blossoms blow and light winds greet;
Where hills and vales in verdure new
  Stretch 'neath a sky of perfect peace,
Or 'mid the isles of ocean blue
  Whose tuneful murmurs never cease.

It may be so; and when we go
  Far from the crush of moiling men,
Where green boughs wave and brooklets flow,
  There may be forms about us then
By us unseen, whose bosoms yearn
  To minister and soothe our pain;
And that is why refreshed we turn
  To lift the daily cross again.

'Mid woods and fields how sweet it were,
  At dewy morn and twilight bland,
To feel in summer winds astir
  Caresses of some vanished hand;

To know the haunting fragrance mild
Was not the flowerets' gift alone,
But came from lips that loved and smiled,
And love us still though silent grown.

WILD ASTERS

IN gold and purple galaxies
Ye star the countryside;
Ye twinkle in the Autumn breeze,
And then ye halfway hide
Your lustre in a cloud of green,
By modesty to gain
A subtler grace to spell the scene,
Wild Asters in the lane.

The blossoms in the fields of May,
Their dewy grace I knew,
But ne'er a one could witch the day
With such a winsome hue;
The clover blooms allured the bee
For luscious treasure fain,
But ye are dearer far to me,
Wild Asters in the lane.

Perhaps it is the Autumn sky
Reflected in your look,
Perhaps the cricket's lonely cry
Ye list beside the brook,

There's something to your presence lends
A charm that's half a pain;
A pathos rare your light attends,
Wild Asters in the lane.

Who knows that flowerets never feel,
Nor thrill with joy or dole,
That when they die no spirits steal
To seek a distant goal!
'Twere surely wiser were it planned
That when your colors wane,
They flee to glad another land,
Wild Asters in the lane.

Ye never saw a city street;
It were a crime to tear
You from your shy and cool retreat
And take you fainting there;
Let Memory your beauty shrine,
And treasure free from stain;
Unseen, but ne'er forgot, be mine,
Wild Asters in the lane.

THE CHEROKEE ROSE

WHITE-BROWED and gold-hearted, at morning a-sway,
'Mid glossy green leaflets, a joy to the day,
In my garden you seem like a dryad astray,
As fair and as fearless of foes.
Sweet Flower, have you wandered your sisters to see?
Your lot is far gayer, unpruned in a tree,
Where the mockingbird sings and the wild bumble-bee,
My blithe-hearted Cherokee Rose.

Astonishment beams in your innocent eyes
And marvel I not at your look of surprise
As you gaze at the blossoms of myriad dyes
That the prim garden borders disclose.
But cherish no envy. You need not the aid
Of the gardener toiling in sun and in shade;
There's a charm that is peerless by art unarrayed,
It is yours, O Cherokee Rose.

To the crest of the old ivied cedar you climb,
For the raindrops to kiss, for the zephyrs to rhyme;
Do you know in a garden such freedom is crime?
Pray gaze on the prim Jacqueminots.
How crisply they bear them! Caressed by the light,
Each rich crimson petal is curved just aright.
Who knows — they may bloom in a ballroom tonight,
While you slumber, sweet Cherokee Rose.

But little you care, O you darling of Spring!
All night you will sleep as the cedar boughs swing;
And at morn to the eastward your grace you will fling
To welcome the dawn as it glows.
While the poor Jacqueminots near a hot chandelier,
On a heart like to break, 'neath a lash with a tear,
Will shatter and fall ere the dawn draweth near,
Passion-blighted, my Cherokee Rose.

Enough, there are hearts that are pure and are true,
And the eyes of their owners are as soft as the dew!
I know such a maid, bonny Rose, do not you?
And this nook 'neath the cedar she knows.
For 'twas here that I wooed her. My heart, how it leapt!
As I told her my love, to my bosom she crept.
Did you hear? 'Neath the roses all secrets are kept;
Keep mine, O Cherokee Rose.

MID - AFTERNOON

I LOVE the calm mid-afternoon,
With sunbeams well aslant,
When, on the breezes half-aswoon,
Is borne the bees' low chant —
Those drowsy rhymes that never cease,
And ever soothe the brain,
Till, freed from care, the heart at peace
Forgets its olden pain.

I love the calm mid-afternoon
Where in some garden nook
My fancy dons its fairy shoon
Above some old-time book
Whose knights are brave, and ladies fair,
And hearts are always true,
And loyal hope wins guerdon rare,
Just as it ought to do.

I love the calm mid-afternoon
When for one too-brief hour
The fevered world is all in tune
And sorrow reft of power.

Alack-a-day! Of bliss the whole
  Can ne'er upon us gleam;
And yet — 'tis but a dreary soul
  That knows not how to dream.

NOVEMBER

THE roses are shattered upon the dank mould,
All scentless and withered their frail petals lie;
How dreary the wind, and its whispers how cold!
Amid the brown rushes how eerie its sigh!
At the death of the flowers the Autumn leaves trembled;
A fate that was tristful foreshadowed their own.
Ah, sad is my heart — in circles assembled
Afar to the southward the swallows have flown.

Now still ye, wee Cricket, amid the dusk there!
Such woe overburdens a piping so thin.
Ye never can voice it; your dirges forbear;
Naught eases my sorrow, no solace I win.
Far better in silence lost beauty remember
While fancy relimns us the joys we have known.
Yea, hush we our hearts — 'tis sodden November.
And far to the southward the swallows have flown.

THE WIND IN THE NIGHT

O DID ye hear the wind as it moaned, as it moaned —
O did ye hear the wind in the night?
Not star was in the dark
That a mortal eye could mark
When arose the eerie strain
As of hapless souls in pain
On their flight —
O did ye hear the wind in the night?

O did ye hear the wind as it shrieked, as it shrieked —
O did ye hear the wind in the night?
I trembled in my dread,
Yea, I shuddered in my bed.
Stricken souls — where did they go?
Were they guilty? Was it woe?
Was it fright?
O did ye hear the wind in the night?

O did ye hear the wind as it wailed, as it wailed —
O did ye hear the wind in the night?

But silence came at last
To the sorrow in the blast,
For no torture lives for aye —
E'en the wicked find a day
Free from blight:
I know it by the wind in the night.

A PETAL OF A SHATTERED ROSE

WEE petal of a shattered rose,
A tiny thing of white,
The sport of every wind that goes
To meet the Autumn night;
How eerie in the waning light —
How piteous its grace!
Where wends it now in feeble flight,
To what dark resting place?

Where are the mellow bees it knew —
Where is the butterfly,
The gallant blithe that came to woo
While yet the noon was high?
Where all the pretty pageantry
That made the garden gay?
I only catch the cricket's cry
Amid the grasses gray.

The scattered leaves from oak tree torn
That in the gust flit by
With rustlings weird have strength to mourn,
To voice at least a sigh;

Poor petal, far more frail than they,
  It dumbly meets its death,
Though pleasure fleet, and hope betray,
  Sweet to its latest breath.

The day is cold. The year is old.
  There's not a star to cheer.
It wrings the heartstrings to behold
  A little thing in fear;
A little thing — it dims the eye —
  That hath no voice to moan,
And only seeks a spot to die
  In darkness and alone.

A moment lulls the piercing blast —
  It flutters to the ground,
And neath a wayside hedge at last
  The long-sought rest is found.
There let the wrinkled spider weave,
  And shroudlike be his weft;
Ay, let him weave, and let him grieve —
  There's naught of Summer left.

A CRICKET SONG

THE Cricket sang in the night
From the wan and withered grass,
And his song was a song of blight,
Of hopes that wane and pass;
Asleep, I stirred my restless head,
For I saw the roses shattered and dead;
And the birds — the birds with summer fled,
From afar they wailed, "Alas!"
Through the long night in my dreams it rang
And rang, the song Cricket sang.

The Cricket sang in the night,
And, oh, 'twas an eerie strain.
The strings of my heart grew tight
To echo the thin refrain;
For I felt a dear, dead hand in mine —
Not warm, but chill as the chill sea brine;
And I saw two eyes with teardrops shine —
That olden look of pain!
And at morn, when I rose in grief to go,
I wondered how did the Cricket know!

Song and Shadow

THE OLD MAN AT THE TOLL GATE

THERE is an old man at the toll gate;
His features are weird and grim.
Though I hate and loathe it greatly
I must greet the face of him.
For on the way I must fare, and so,
Though he gives me pain and works me woe,
Through his horrible, horrible gate I must go,
The dreadful old man at the toll gate.

This gaunt graybeard at the toll gate,
He stretches his fingers old,
And his withered and covetous grasping
Can never be bribed with gold;
But ever he stands in relentless mood,
His eager clutch is greedy and rude,
And yet what he takes can do him no good,
This gaunt graybeard at the toll gate.

This horrid old man at the toll gate,
As my trembling footstep nears,
With a smile I cannot beguile him,
I cannot persuade him with tears

He leans and leans in his ghastly glee
To take of my treasures his hateful fee;
While I shudder and look his choice to see,
  The horrid old man at the toll gate.

This old miser man at the toll gate,
  To his guarded latch I've crept
With the hope that I might pass it
  By chance while its warder slept.
Vainly I seek to be shrewd or sly;
He's always awake when I come nigh,
And I pay his fee with a weary sigh
  To the old miser man at the toll gate.

The greedy old man at the toll gate,
  He waits with covetous eyes.
He has garnered the most that I treasured,
  And little I've left me to prize.
He has tithed my strength from year to year,
He has taken the faces I loved most dear —
Alas, I have now not much to fear
  From Time, the old man at the toll gate.

FOREBODING

IF love could pass as die away
The summer winds at ebb of day
That through the amber silence stray,
Sweet heralds of repose,
Whispering in the ear of Night
The memory of the Morning's light,
The fragrance of its rose,
Then we might love and never dread
The awful void when love is dead.

THE FAIRY IN THE FIRELIGHT

THERE'S a Fairy in the firelight
Upon my ingle-stone,
And oftentimes she sings to me
Of what hath long since flown;
No louder than a whisper,
Far sweeter than a bird,
It is the dearest music
That mortal ever heard.

There's a Fairy in the firelight,
An Elf that is so shy
She never makes her melody
If anyone is nigh;
And as she sings she moves her wings
And waves her wand to me,
And while that wand is waving
What pictures I can see!

There's a Fairy in the firelight,
I know not how, but when
She sets my heart a-dreaming,
I am a child again;

The world hath lost its sorrow,
  There is no blight, no bane,
And every dread afar hath fled,
  The past can give no pain.

There's a Fairy in the firelight,
  And when the flame is low,
They win no thought, the living,
  From me amid the glow,
But while the music lingers
  Beside the embers red,
They gather near my soul to cheer,
  The Spirits of my dead!

There's a Fairy in the firelight,
  And if by fancy brought,
The solace is so wonderful
  I know 'tis heaven-wrought —
I know she is a messenger
  Unto a dwelling bleak,
From loving eyes that long for me,
  From lips that fain would speak.

SONG

WHAT are the dark Winds saying
Now that the days are drear,
The meadow grass a-graying,
On the withered fern a tear?
What are the dark Winds saying?
O lone, lone, Heart, they are praying
A prayer for the passing year.

What are the weird Winds sighing
Now that the year is old,
And the thistle-down is flying
Like a wraith o'er the chill, dank mold?
O lone, lone Heart, they are sighing
A dirge for a sweet hope dying,
And a faithful love untold.

FORGIVEN

AS I strayed through the wood in the withering day
And the moon wore a veil of gray,
I listened to the song that the twilight weaves —
The dim, low strain of the quivering leaves
That only the wind can repeat;
And in the half-night, with its weird, weird light,
I felt my heart a-beat.
For it seemed in that lone place,
That my fair first Love was nigh;
In the shivering dusk, with its breath of musk,
I could almost hear her sigh.

As I strayed through the wood in the blossoming night,
And the moon waxed shyly bright,
By her wan, sweet lustre it seemed to me
That my old Love's face I could verily see;
And I longed — how I longed — to be shriven!
"O Sweetheart, speak! But a word I seek —
To know that the dead hath forgiven!"

Then it seemed in that lone place,
While mine eyes with tears were blurred,
Down the woodland aisle I saw her smile;
And I knew that my prayer was heard.

THE ROSE AND THE STAR

WHY is the rose so gay in its filmy beauty clad,
And why is the star of eve alway, in the cloudless west so sad?
The rose lives only for a day, and at dark in the dust it lies,
While the star shines still o'er river and hill, a joy to mortal eyes —
Why, I say, is the rose so gay, and the evening star never glad?

The voice of the wind I caught,
O'er a shattered rose it blew,
And I know its words, as it wandered by,
In the garden old were true.

"The rose is gay, though brief its breath,
Because it ne'er hath looked on death;
But the evening star on high —
Why should it not be sad? Alas,
It hath watched a million summers pass,
Like beautiful visions over a glass,
And — a myriad roses die!"

THE WAYS OF MEMORY

STRANGE are the ways of Memory.
Who knoweth what her sheaf will be?
She gleans the while we sleep.
She heedeth not the hours a-chime,
But gathers 'neath the scythe of Time
The treasure she would keep.

She threads her path mid joy and grief,
Takes here a thorn, and there a leaf;
There's nothing 'neath her ban.
'Tis very strange, her how — and why;
Much that we prize she passeth by;
None may divine her plan.

Beneath the sun, beneath the moon,
At morningtide, at eve, at noon
She weaves her quiet spell.
She chooseth here, rejecteth there;
And slowly grows her garland rare,
Each flower an immortelle.

Sometimes we strive with might and main
To guide her choice; 'tis all in vain.
Upon the land and sea

She follows us with haunting gaze,
And on our hearts her hand she lays —
No whither can we flee.

Strange are the ways of Memory.
Who knoweth what her choice will be,
What treasure she will prize?
Perchance a rose dead many a year,
The light upon a silent tear
Within a loved one's eyes.

BY-GONE DAYS

O BY-GONE Days, O By-gone Days,
More distant every year,
The dreary seasons slowly pass
And you but grow more dear;
Like faithful stars whose radiance
The upper deeps illume,
In dreams by day, as well as night,
I watch your beauty bloom.

O By-gone Days, dear By-gone Days,
The happy birds of Spring,
They strove in vain your grace to lilt,
'Twas past their power to sing.
As dewdrops gleam upon the rose
That meets the kiss of morn,
So haloed Hope each budding joy
Now shattered and forlorn.

O By-gone Days, fair By-gone Days, —
I see a garden knoll;
Amid the golden jasmine bells
The brown bees toil and troll;

A mock-bird in the myrtle boughs
  Sings carols o'er his nest —
Sooth, angel ears in Paradise
  No sweeter song e'er blest!

O By-gone Days, long By-gone Days —
  There are no sunbeams now
As bright as those that slanted then
  Through every blooming bough;
Such perfumes now no blooms keep,
  No winds so softly blow
As those that haunt me in my sleep
  From days of long ago.

O By-gone Days, lost By-gone Days
  That never can return,
Though blue your skies, your blossoms rare,
  Not most for these I yearn.
All these I might have learned to lack,
  And never more to see —
But, oh, the voices that I loved,
  The eyes that smiled on me!

THE VOICE IN THE NIGHT

I HEARD a voice in the night,
  It came from far away.
'Twas the voice of my vanished youth;
  In the gloom I heard it say:
" Where are the deeds you vowed to do —
Where are the laurels bright of hue?
There's naught in your hands but dust and rue,
  And your face is worn and wistful.
Once I held your promise true;
  The end is drear and tristful."

It paused. And again in the night
  I caught the sorrowful tone
Fading and dying away,
  Like the echo of a moan:
" I was so happy, happy then!
Where are the prizes of sword and pen?
I limned you high mid the sons of men,
  And glory-crowned forever.
Alas, we never shall meet again —
  No, never — never — never !"

It spoke no more. In the night
I breathed a weary sigh;
And then to the tristful voice
I softly made reply:
" O vanished youth, that laughed in glee,
'Twas you, 'twas you that promised me:
Where are your visions fair to see?
Flown, like the dew from the heather;
Each, alone, his weird must dree,
But all may mourn together."

SONG

HOW long it seems since I was young,
And all the world was fair;
How merry were the songs I sung,
And how I scoffed at care!
'Tis only youth that's gay and bold —
I am so old, I am so old!

My summer was all love and glee,
I've seen its grace depart.
Now bitter winds of memory
Wail round my autumn heart.
Yes, love hath fled, and friendship's cold —
I am so old, I am so old.

A DEAD BUTTERFLY

HIS wings are yet with beauty tinted,
Their hues are still as lightly fair
As when their fragile glory glinted
Gleeful through the Summer air.
Though motionless — no breezes breasting,
Careless whence their fragrance blows —
So bright in death, he seems but resting
On a rose.

Ah, let the bees untiring labor,
Filled each with forethought and with fear,
And scorn with sullen hum their neighbor,
For him the rosebud sheds a tear;
And all the garden seems more tristful —
How mournfully each blossom sways!
Or is it Fancy makes me wistful
As I gaze?

Now had his slender hold been stronger
On Summer joys too briefly kenned,
Or had his happy days been longer,
Lingering on till Autumn's end,

Could he have lived, and only left us
When the cup of bliss was drained —
Ah, 'tis that Time so soon bereft us
We are pained.

The bee that dies with golden honey
Safely hoarded in a hive
Is like a miser and his money,
We scarce can wish him still alive.
But here no sordid thought steals on us
To shame our grief — 'tis all sincere;
For the cheery grace that won us
He is dear.

So haste, kind Night, with dewy glances
His tiny bier in lustre lave;
Fulfil, fulfil my longing fancies —
Let forms unseen now delve his grave.
While the white June roses shatter
Let the Pixies take their guest,
Where the petals faintly patter,
Let him rest.

I WANT TO GO A-BERRYIN'

I WANT to go a-berryin' —
How strangely like a tune
Echo those words around my desk
This sultry afternoon!
The figures all to berries turn;
I can't make out a bill:
I want to go a-berryin'
On Farmer Bolton's hill.

I want to go a-berryin',
There's nothin' half so sweet;
The longin' stirs my blood until
It tingles in my feet.
I see the red, red clusters in
The field above the mill:
I want to go a-berryin'
On Farmer Bolton's hill.

I want to go a-berryin' —
But not to go alone;
I want to go with Mary Jane
As in the years a-flown.

Just one tin pail between us — how
  Our han's would meet and thrill!
I want to go a-berryin'
    On Farmer Bolton's hill.

I want to go a-berryin'.
  What things we used to say!
Ah, Mary Jane, she always had
  The sweetest sort o' way!
To hear her little laugh — oh my!
  'Twould set my soul a-thrill
When we were out a-berryin'
    On Farmer Bolton's hill.

I want to go a-berryin'.
  Alas, why did I leave
The only girl I ever loved —
  I wonder did she grieve!
How could I hope to find afar
  Aught that her place could fill,
Or sweeter joys than berryin'
    On Farmer Bolton's hill?

I want to go a-berryin' —
  I want to, oh, so much,
To go I'd give just all the gold
  I ever hope to touch.

But though the eyes of Mary Jane,
Like stars, are beckonin' still,
No more shall we go berryin'
On Farmer Bolton's hill.

THE BACHELOR'S CHRISTMAS EVE

SANTA CLAUS peeped from the hearthstone,
And I — I peeped from the bed.
"This call is quite queer! Pray, why are you here?"
I summoned my courage and said.
"If you've come here a-seeking wee stockings and shoes,
You've made a mistake in the matter of flues —
For this is a bachelor's chimney."

Santa Claus stared from the hearthstone,
And I — I stared from my bed.
His cheeks, they were pink, and he tipped me a wink,
And quoth, with a wag of his head:
"Good Friend, don't ask me the reason I came;
Just say if there's something you'd like — that's the game.
Come, up with your stocking. I vow it's a shame
That this is a bachelor's chimney!"

Santa Claus stood on the hearthstone,
And I, half rose from my bed.
But I uttered no word — for my heart was stirred
And I thought of the years long sped.
" Is there nothing you lack? " He spoke with glee.
" I'm your fairy godfather, you know," said he.
" In my pack I've wonderful things — come see —
Yes, e'en for a bachelor's chimney."

Santa Claus laughed on the hearthstone,
But I — smiled not from my bed;
A great longing filled my soul, and killed
The joy that his kind face shed.
" The gift I desire — I fear 'twill cost —
Is the light of two eyes 'neath the marble mossed —
Go, bring me the Love I loved — and lost! "
And the night wind moaned in the chimney.

Santa Claus shrank on the hearthstone,
And I, sank back on my bed;
And the embers fell — like a ghostly knell —
To ashes gray and dead.

" God pity the wish of your stricken soul! "
He sighed, and I saw a tear-drop roll.
" The boon that you crave is beyond my dole — "
And he fled with the wind in the chimney.

THE OLD SONGS

I WANT to hear the old songs,
The songs I used to hear,
When every day brought happiness,
And Fancy flouted fear;
When sunset's glory ever new
Foretold a morn more bright —
I want to hear the old songs,
Oh, sing me one tonight,

I want to hear the old songs,
No thrilling, no roulade
Where music dons her lace and gems
And trips in masquerade.
But give to me the simple strain
That seeks the heart outright,
And nests within its deepest part —
Oh, sing me one tonight.

I want to hear the old songs,
Their names I need not tell;
The quaint old names mean naught to you,
But I can feel their spell.

Each one, a key, can ope to me
The garden of delight
That blossomed in my vanished youth:
Oh, sing me one tonight.

I want to hear the old songs —
I never hear them now —
The tunes that cheer the tired heart,
And smooth the care-worn brow.
Heard in the twilight's dreamy hour,
Best suited to their flight,
Each cadence like a blessing falls —
O, sing me one tonight.

I want to hear the old songs,
The gentle lullabies
That reft me of my weariness,
And closed my childish eyes;
The fabled music of the spheres
Beside those strains would blight,
The dear old songs my Mother sang —
Oh, sing me one tonight.

THE END.